



FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

02 October 2023 – 6pm

MINUTES

Present Councillors: Cllr. Marshall (Committee Chair), Cllr. Buckenham, Cllr. Jones

Clerk and RFO: Mr S Baxter **Members of the public (MOP):** 0

Meeting commenced at 6pm. **Meeting was held at the North Thoresby Village Hall, North Thoresby.**

AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

1. Committee's Chair welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked the councillors for attending.

2. Question from the Public

The Clerk confirmed that there was no public in attendance.

3. To receive apologies from members

The Clerk confirmed that all members of the Finance Committee were present and thus he had not received apologies from any members.

4. To receive any declarations of interest in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and to consider any requests for dispensations

The Clerk confirmed that no declarations have been received from any Councillors prior to the meeting - he asked all Councillors if they wish to offer any declarations for any subject of the Parish Council Meeting. The Clerk confirmed that none were offered and thus it can be considered that there is no pecuniary interest of any Councillors which would affect their voting of any motion on the agenda.

5. To propose to exclude members of the public and press from participation:

The Clerk confirmed that there was no public in attendance and thus no motion needed.

6. Role of Finance Committee - under the Terms of Reference and best practice

The Chair stated that the role of the Finance Committee has been outlined and accepted through the ToRs which were agreed by the Full Council. The main element is to ensure that the funds of the community are protected carefully by operating a proper community and Parish Council functions.

7. Membership of the Finance Committee

The Chair stated that she felt it would be appropriate to have four members of the Finance Committee which would allow coverage for a quorate Financial Committee meeting if one person couldn't attend. It would also allow only finance committee members to be authorised to undertake actions in the Council bank account.

- ***Motion to agree to the usual membership of the Finance Committee to be FOUR COUNCILLORS was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.***

8. Banking operation and authorised users - to ascertain what is required and appropriate

The Chair proposed that only members of the Finance Committee can be authorised to either approve payments in the bank account, or to be a reserve inputter (in case the Clerk is not available). This would ensure that there is a strict control of who can gain access to the bank and approve payments or internal transfers.

- ***Motion to agree to the condition of access of the Parish Council bank account is membership of the Finance Committee was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.***

9. Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Process - to discuss and agree

The Committee discussed the proposed Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Procedure and felt that it was suitable to ensure that the Community's funds were properly protected. This was to give confidence that anything the Parish Council spends, is done so properly and carefully.

They felt that they wished to add an element that all projects or events must be fully balanced and if there is a cost to the Council, that proper approval must be sought and gained before the event takes place. This ensures that no event or project can be agreed without the full financial impact of said event to be fully understood and any cost properly accounted. In addition they wanted to be absolutely clear in this policy that anything that any Councillors purchase for any events are at their own liability unless full permission is given by the Full Council - permission cannot be assumed.

The final element should be that items purchased for any events should have the element of sustainability to ensure that any items are not just thrown away after one use (unless there is no alternative). This is crucial to promote a green ethos to the community.

10. RFO update on the financial position of the Parish Council

The main elements of the update are:

- The finances are looking solid but still careful management is needed
- There is £43,264.17 in the four bank accounts
- Savings earmarked of £5k, but possible non-budget items may cost £3k.
- Staff salary budget on track
- Grass cutting contract was budgeted too low by previous administration
- Aiming to turn a deficit budget of £1.1k to a surplus budget of £2k.

Overall finances are better than feared a few months ago and hope to have positive effect on the future precept considerations.

11. Long term aim for Finance Committee

The Chair of the Committee stated that it was crucial that the two most important elements of the finance management of the Council is TRANSPARENCY and ACCOUNTABILITY. This is to ensure that there is nothing (other than personal data information) that should not be disclosed for the community to review and to also give confidence to the community that every penny is carefully managed. And if any savings can be made, or better use of the funds can be envisioned then the Council will look into every option.

The Committee stated that they wanted to ensure that every event or project the Council undertakes is properly managed and budgeted - to ensure that no Council action is done without proper management of the financial and resource impact.

This will ensure that this administration is open with the community and not hiding anything.

12. Future Meetings of the Finance Committee

The Chair stated that the Committee could meet as often as needed - but possibly before PC meeting to save costs and time. The next meeting would on the 04 December 2023 at 6pm to discuss the Anti-Fraud Policy and possible new members of the Finance Committee.

- ***Motion to agree the next Finance Committee Meeting on the 13 November 2023 was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.***

Meeting was closed by the Committee Chair at 6.40pm.
